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***AWARDS FOR ALL AGES* FINALISTS PIONEER NEW APPROACHES TO TACKLE LONELINESS, CARE, HOUSING, UNEMPLOYMENT, AGEISM AND COMMUNITY BREAKDOWN**

Some of Britain’s biggest social and economic issues are being tackled by intergenerational projects named today (17 December 2012) as finalists of the 2012 Awards for All Ages.

The pioneering projects are addressing loneliness, care for older people, housing, unemployment, ageism and fragmented communities with real imagination and impact.

The 13 finalists for the Awards run by United for All Ages are:

* **Magic Me, East London** – ‘cocktails in care homes’ weekly evening parties
* **Friends of the Elderly** – ‘What does Christmas mean to you?’ campaign on loneliness
* **Homeshare East Sussex** – matching older people with a spare room with younger people
* **The Peace Hospice, Watford** – ‘creating memories’ conversations towards the end of life
* **Intergen** – older people working with young people in schools
* **Ransackers Association** – higher education opportunities for people aged 55+
* **Community Transport** – minibus transport giving people of all ages new opportunities
* **LJWB, Leeds** – caring for 2000 people a week, with social support from younger families
* **The Children’s Society, Greenwich** – primary school curriculum involving older people
* **Haverstock School, Camden** – Saturday seniors’ sessions run by students
* **Holly Lodge Community Centre, Camden** – bringing local people of all ages together
* **Learning for the Fourth Age** – volunteers supporting learning for care home residents
* **Linking Generations Northern Ireland** – supporting projects bringing generations together

Stephen Burke, director of United for All Ages, said: “The Awards highlight how action by and for people of all ages can tackle some of the big issues facing Britain. The 13 finalists are all making a real difference locally and nationally. By bringing older and young people together in different ways, they are reducing loneliness, addressing ageism and strengthening communities. They are also improving opportunities in care, housing and employment. With loneliness and isolation increasingly recognised as a major social ill, these projects provide a positive way forward.”

**Notes to editors**

For media enquiries including contact details and photos of the Awards for All Ages finalists, please contact Stephen Burke on 01692 650816 or 07714 334510, or email: stephen.burke@unitedforallages.com

Full details of the 13 finalists are available below and at [www.unitedforallages.com](http://www.unitedforallages.com) The overall Awards winners will be announced in February 2013.

For details of the 2011 Awards for All Ages winners*,* visit [here](http://unitedforallages.com/drupal/sites/all/sites/default/files/files/Awards%20for%20All%20Ages%202011%20Winners.pdf).

**United for All Ages** is a social enterprise that aims to build a stronger Britain by bringing younger and older people together through shared sites, shared caring and shared interests. Launched in 2010, United is working with councils, charities, universities and companies to make ‘Britain for all ages’ a reality.  United for All Ages was set up by Stephen Burke and Denise Burke who both have substantial experience in childcare and eldercare. Stephen was chief executive of two national charities, Daycare Trust and Counsel and Care, and was cabinet member for social services and vice-chair of a primary care trust in a London borough. Denise led on childcare for Peterborough city council and headed up youth and childcare for the Mayor of London as well as being chair of BBC Children in Need for London and the South East. Stephen is now co-chair of Grandparents Plus and trustee of several older people’s charities. United for All Ages has focused on developing ‘care for all ages’ and ‘centres for all ages’. Policy papers from United for All Ages, including *United or divided?*, *Investing in the future, Ten Dilnot Flaws* and *The Childcare Funding Crisis*, can be downloaded from [www.unitedforallages.com](http://www.unitedforallages.com)

In 2012 United for All Ages and My Family Care launched [www.goodcareguide.co.uk](http://www.goodcareguide.co.uk) the only site where families can find, rate and review childcare and eldercare.

**AWARDS FOR ALL AGES 2012 – MORE ABOUT THE FINALISTS**

**Magic Me, East London** – ‘cocktails in care homes’ weekly evening parties

Cocktails in Care Homes grew out of conversations with care home residents. They identified a need for evening adult activity. It started as a pilot in 2010. Now thanks to a pool of 100 volunteers, Magic Me hosts weekly evening parties across East London for residents, relatives, friends and carers. Magic Me provides lighting, decorations, music and a range of drinks to set a party mood and encourage conversation. Residents are canvassed about their favourite music and drinks to ensure they genuinely enjoy and look forward to parties. The project is growing to reach more people in isolation. <http://www.magicme.co.uk/>

**Friends of the Elderly** – ‘What does Christmas mean to you?’ campaign on loneliness

Friends of the Elderly raised awareness about isolation and loneliness via an emotive PR campaign in 2011 as 500,000 older people prepared to spend Christmas alone. A moving film asked all ages ‘What does Christmas mean to you?’, prompting thoughts about Christmas for those with friends and family and for those without. Conversation was invited on twitter at #christmasmeans. To launch the campaign, independent survey results were released to the media revealing nearly one in four would not be including older relatives, neighbours or community members over the festive season. A text-to-donate and volunteering call-to-action were included in all content. <http://www.fote.org.uk/>

**Homeshare East Sussex** – matching older people with a spare room with younger people

Homeshare East Sussex aims to match householders with a spare room with people who need accommodation, in exchange for ten hours a week practical support. Householders are generally older people or have a physical or learning disability or mental health issues. The practical support can include things like cooking, cleaning, shopping or even walking the dog. It is also essential that the homesharer is prepared to provide company to the householder as loneliness is the most common reason why householders homeshare. They have a thorough process which includes references and CRB checks and in-depth interviews to ensure good matches. <http://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/socialcare/carers/homeshare/default.htm>

**The Peace Hospice, Watford** – ‘creating memories’ conversations towards the end of life

‘Creating memories’ was an intergenerational project involving twelve students and four patients that ran over four weeks. The aim was to produce a mixed media memory picture about the patients’ lives. The patients and students worked together using spidergrams, a simple method of organising information to explore the patient’s life. They used photographs of objects, pictures and memorabilia collected by patients. To celebrate the project, they had an exhibition and tea party where patients’ families, the students and members of the community visited the hospice. <http://www.peacehospice.co.uk/>

**Intergen** – older people working with young people in schools

Intergen creates opportunities to enrich learning, raise aspirations, discover learning is fun, and build stronger communities by bringing older and younger people together to share experiences in their local schools. In partnership with a secondary and two primary schools in a neighbourhood, Intergen recruits and appoints an older person to be the coordinator for the cluster of three schools. Intergen trains and supports the coordinators and pays them a fee for their service. They are responsible for recruiting older people living locally to become volunteers in the Intergen schools, organising a social event and a business meeting once a term. <http://www.intergen.org.uk/>

**Ransackers Association** – higher education opportunities for people aged 55+

The Ransackers Association’s project is an ‘educational adventure for older people’. People aged 55 plus without previous higher education are invited to research a project of their own choosing at a college or university. Tutorial, IT and study skills support are incorporated in the project to enable seniors to participate fully in academic study, an opportunity many thought had passed them by. Mature students live and study with all ages in a shared college experience. Returning Ransackers students bring confidence to affect change in their communities, while demonstrating to younger people that age is a positive asset. <https://sites.google.com/site/ransackersassociation/>

**Community Transport** – minibus transport giving people of all ages new opportunities

Formally registered in 1966, Community Transport is a national charity providing passenger transport, furniture re-use and recycling and training services across three regions of England – the North East, Greater Manchester and the West Midlands. Their mission is to bring people and opportunities together, to help transform lives and build better communities. Community Transport’s services support mobility, access and choice for individuals whose needs cannot be met by private or public transport. The passenger transport services are fundamental to making communities more socially inclusive. They provide safe and cost-effective minibus transport that is essential to the work of voluntary and community sector organisations. <http://www.communitytransport.org/>

**LJWB, Leeds** – caring for 2000 people a week, with social support from younger families

LJWB is a registered charity established in 1878 and is a social care provider supporting approximately 2000 people per week. They aim to promote independence, community inclusion, reduce isolation and enable people to achieve their aspirations. Their services include community and residential learning disability and mental health services. Moorcare community services providing advice, signposting and support, homecare and respite for carers. The Family Hub offering social interaction and improved wellbeing for older people via community centre activities including keep fit, art, line dancing, discussion groups and bridge, plus a children and families service including adult and toddler groups and parenting programme.

**The Children’s Society, Greenwich** – primary school curriculum involving older people

This Children’s Society project aims to improve younger and older people’s experience of living together in four deprived communities in Greenwich. The intergenerational community cohesion project at Horn Park primary school engaged older people in the local area and young people from the school who were struggling with their attainment and behaviour. The project facilitated initial sessions with the group to look at their perceptions of one another, what they care about in their community and ran some activities building trust. After six months the group now leads activities themselves, sharing their skills like origami, gardening, writing poems etc. They reflect individually and together on the social skills, knowledge and understanding that they have gained from being involved. <http://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/>

**Haverstock School, Camden** – Saturday seniors’ sessions run by students

Haverstock students host monthly Saturday seniors’ sessions for the local community offering refreshments and a film or bingo. Volunteer students meet, greet and chat, serve refreshments, help with the bingo and run the raffle. Every February, they host a Valentine’s tea dance with a live staff band and lavish tea with scones and cakes made by younger students where old and young share the dance floor. Each Christmas hampers put together by every tutor group are delivered to seniors in local sheltered housing; in January they host a New Year party for local seniors. In addition students and seniors participate together in film, drama, art and poetry projects. <http://www.haverstock.camden.sch.uk/page_viewer.asp?page=Home&pid=1>

**Holly Lodge Community Centre, Camden** – bringing local people of all ages together

A year ago children were banned from the community centre after 5pm and noise including laughing was banned. No youngsters were allowed into the luncheon club. Since the discovery of a youngster excluded from school last March, things are changing. The luncheon club now allows youngsters to dine with them. An unofficial tea party on the veranda. Launch of the Young Kentish Towner journalism project, Pilot, altering both adult and youth stereotypes. Diamond Jubilee pod project and ceremony for ages 8-85 years. Holiday intergenerational activities with the luncheon club. And much more. <http://www.hollylodge.org.uk/>

**Learning for the Fourth Age** – volunteers supporting learning for care home residents

L4A provides one-to-one learning opportunities to older people living in care settings using a network of younger volunteers. Learning boosts confidence and sociability for everyone and creates new relationships between generations. It has also been linked to reduced medication for older people and increased job prospects for older people. <http://www.l4a.org.uk/>

**Linking Generations Northern Ireland** – supporting projects bringing generations together

LGNI is the Northern Ireland initiative promoting intergenerational practice by offering opportunities for generations to come together and learn from one another. They develop and promote opportunities to bring generations together and build capacity within communities to sustain this approach. They support the statutory, private and voluntary sectors to recognise the potential of all-age approaches and embedding them within their strategies, practices and policies. LGNI encourages, lobbies and influences government to provide support and commit to all-age approaches to address ageism and segregation in society. <http://www.centreforip.org.uk/northern-ireland>